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CENTENNIAL

Eighteen Presidents,

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CONTEMPORANEOUS RULERS.

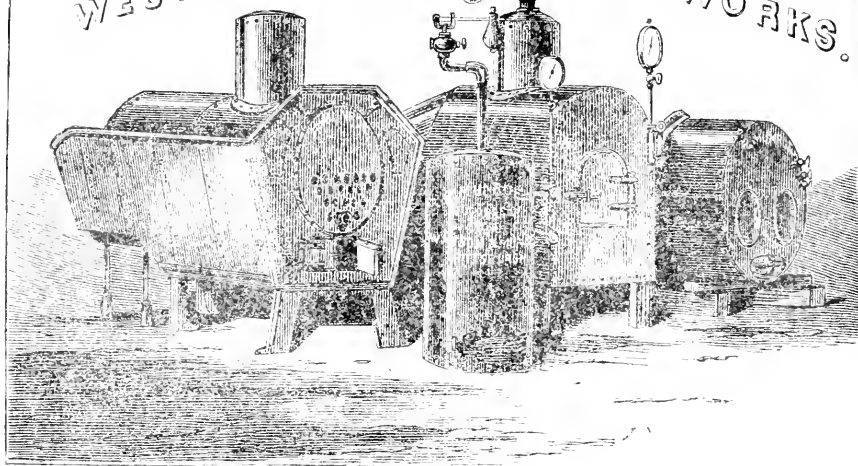
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EIGHTEEN
PRESIDENTS,

1875

Contemporaneous Rulers,

By W. A. TAYLOR.

PITTSBURGH :

PRINTED BY BARR & MYERS, CORNER WOOD STREET AND VIRGIN ALLEY.

1876.

EIGHTEEN PRESIDENTS

AND

CONTEMPORANEOUS RULERS.

I.

As we are now entering upon the celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of our Independence Day, which will occur on the Fourth of July, 1876, a brief review of our past history, as regards those who have ruled us during the century cannot but be appropriate.

Thirteen years after the date of our "Declaration," having established a Constitution, which superseded our Articles of Confederation,—which though not "without form" were very nearly "void," as far as their injunctions and requisitions on the States were regarded,—thirteen years after the "Declaration," our first President was inaugurated. As the present incumbent will be President until the 4th of March, 1877, and continue in office during the Centennial period, it is proposed to briefly sketch each of our eighteen Chief Magistrates, who they were, how they were "armed and equipped" for their great offices, and how each obtained his distinguished honors; with brief reference, by way of parallel, to the contemporaneous rulers of the leading powers of Europe.

It would seem that the hereditary rulers of the Old World, about the time we had, through eight years of suffering and sacrifice, and the life-blood of thousands of brave men, secured the right to select our own rulers, were worse than the average of those who claim to rule by divine right.

In a letter written in 1810, Mr. Jefferson, who was in Paris during the French Revolution, and whose active and comprehensive mind was able to take in the most complete view of the situation, when the thrones began to totter, thus sketches the reigning sovereigns of Europe when the agitation in France began :

“ I often amused myself with contemplating the characters of the then reigning sovereigns of Europe. Louis XVI. was a fool of my own knowledge, and despite the answers made for him at his trial. The King of Spain was a fool, and of Naples the same. They passed their lives in hunting, and dispatched two couriers a week one thousand miles, to let each other know what game they had killed the preceding days. The King of Sardinia was a fool. All these were Bourbons. The Queen of Portugal, a Braganza, was an idiot by nature. And so was the King of Denmark. Their sons, as Regents, exercised the powers of government. The King of Prussia, son of the Great Frederick, was a mere hog in body as well as in mind. Gustavus, of Sweden, and Joseph of Austria, were really crazy, and George of England, you know, was in a straight waistcoat. [His son was made Regent after this was written.] There remained, then, none but old Catharine (of Russia,) who had been too lately picked up to have lost her common sense. In this state Bonaparte found Europe, and it was this state of its rulers that lost it with scarcely a struggle.”

The catalogue was no doubt truthfully given, and we must admit that the list on which old “Catharine” stands at the head, could not be very remarkable for either good morals, talents or education. But for the present we shall consider our own rulers.

I. 1789–1797. With GEORGE WASHINGTON for our first President we began our new experiment in the manner of choosing rulers, taking the surest possible mode, as all the world then thought, of selecting the “fittest.”

That Washington was the best fitted man then living for the place to which he was called, there are none now so captious as to dispute. Those who questioned whether he did the best that could be done, either as Commander-in-Chief, or as President, were silenced and borne down by the grandeur, dignity and severe justice of his character and the great results of his administration, and the bitter things men said of him, when remembered at all, are regretted and forgiven. If ever a man tried to be impartial, and act without passion and partizanship in public affairs, that man was George Washington. He certainly was a measureless height

above any Chief Magistrate or Ruler of any other country contemporary with him. There is no doubt that he was a Federalist in politics—that he believed that the preponderance of power should be in the Central Government—but he had presided over the Convention which framed the Constitution,—he knew the feelings, purposes and desires of the members, and, while he feared that our plan of government was, perhaps, an experiment that would fail, he would have given, as he said in calm determination, his “last drop of blood” to ensure it a fair trial.

His personal dignity; his laborious and attentive official habits; his severe economy in the expenditure of the public moneys; his detestation of favoritism and nepotism; his contempt for those who “crooked the pregnant hinges of the knee that thrift might follow fawning,” all marked him as possessing the qualities needed for the first President of the United States, in the then peculiar condition of their internal policy, of their Treasury and of their relations to the world at large; and eminently the man to set a fitting and commanding example to all his successors so long as the Republic shall continue to exist.

II. 1797–1801. JOHN ADAMS was inaugurated in 1797. Other men, perhaps, did as much as he to light the revolutionary flame and feed it with the substantial fuel of solid and profound and polished argument, but none labored more constantly and effectively. He was a scholar, a statesman and an orator of the first attainments.

Whether painful experience of the loose, ill-settled and worse observed sanctions of the Articles of Confederation, or from a limited confidence in the capacity of man for self-government, or from both these causes combined, he honestly believed that the Federal power should predominate over State in almost everything, and he spared no pains, while he was President, to make the strong hand of the central government felt everywhere.

His interpretation of the Presidential duty was rejected by the people, and if he made the Federal power to be feared during his term, he also provoked toward it general resistance and detestation. But apart from the tendency to encourage the perhaps too rapid acquisition of a national naval armament, his administration was not extravagant. And while he yielded less to the popular demand for power than Jefferson, he never looked upon the people as proper subjects for pecuniary speculation and spoliation.

He went down because his theory of administering the government was not popular,—his administration was certainly vigorous,—and believing that the British Constitution was the best form of government ever devised by the wit of man,—and preferring the British nation to his own, his partiality to that country, its people and its government, was so marked as to call forth much censure upon Mr. Adams and his administration.

III. 1801–1809. In 1801, THOMAS JEFFERSON came into power after a severe contest, in which, owing to the machinations of the bad and brilliant Aaron Burr, he succeeded by *one* vote only, although but for Burr's defection, he would have had a decided majority. He represented those who claimed that the preponderance of power should be retained by the States and the State governments, in preference to centralizing it at the Federal metropolis. That the people would have a more strict accountability from their agents, the closer those agents were to those whom they served. That nothing should be done by the Federal authority that could be done by the people in townships, cities or States

Mr. Jefferson had given the entire labor of his life, and of his great abilities to the popular "home rule" side of this then novel theory of government. Although bred to the law, he was more of a statesman, thinker and writer, than his predecessor, Mr. Adams, whose great force lay in his eloquence and legal learning. Besides the famous "Declaration of Independence," his contributions, the statute books and Constitutions, both in his own State and in the United States, are rich in legacies of his learning, and his profound and ingenious intellect.

He was a man of varied and extraordinary acquirements,—his forecast was wonderful,—and whoever has read his predictions as to certain measures of government, and particularly as to the result of African slavery in this country, will be struck with wonder at his prophetic wisdom.

IV. 1809–1817. By his studies and experiences JAMES MADISON was eminently qualified for the Presidential office. He was, perhaps, the most attentive, laborious and pains-taking member of the Convention which framed the Constitution, and he well deserves the title of "Father of the Constitution." The only reliable and correct record of the proceedings of the Conventions was kept by him. Jefferson's Secretary of State for the entire term of eight years of his Presidential service, he was through life the trusted friend of the sage and seer of Monticello.

The second war with Great Britain was agitated, declared, fought and finished during his two terms, and the issue was considered triumphant by his own nation and by the world. He was a most careful ruler, and was even thought to be a timid one, by certain dashing and demonstrative spirits, but he left behind him the reputation of an honest, wise and competent Chief Magistrate.

V. 1817—1825. JAMES MONROE was elected and served his two terms during what was designated as “the era of good feeling” between the old and contending parties, but at the same time it was marked with a general depression of trade, manufactures and general business consequent upon the exhausting effects of the war. Mr. Monroe was in the public service, either in a military or civil capacity almost constantly from the breaking out of the Revolutionary war.

He entered the American army at the age of 18, studied law with Jefferson, with whom he continued in the closest intimacy until Jefferson's decease. He was considered a safe and a successful, but not a brilliant statesman, and he had graduated at the feet of his two eminent predecessors.

Thus far the Presidents had come from the active Revolutionary generation. Each of them had shared in the first struggle with Great Britain, and had borne a prominent part in it; some of them were distinguished in the second contest with that power. They were all soldiers who had fought side by side in “the cause of mankind,” which the American Revolution has always been truly called. They had battled for more than the mere “Independence” of the country from Great Britain. They had founded and reared an entirely new system of government.

VI. 1825-1829. With Mr. Monroe, the old Revolutionary generation went out of the Presidency, and in 1825, JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, son of the second President, was inaugurated the sixth. His capacity to perform the duties of the office, we suppose has never been seriously called in question. The companion and pupil of his father while he was a Foreign Minister, he learned the ways of diplomacy, and of the Chief Magistracy, as less favored men learn the profession by which they expect to gain their livelihood, their fortune or their fame.

He was the only one of all our Presidents, indeed, who had served an “apprenticeship” in the art and mystery of governing a great nation. That he was proud of the rare distinction of having

been promoted to the exalted place his father had occupied, there can be no doubt, and however men may think of the *accident* or the *manner* of his advancement, or of the remarkable and startling change of views that followed; none will dispute his acquaintance with the details of the duties he was called upon to perform, nor of his fair intentions to perform his duty well.

VII. 1829-1837. In 1828, after a political campaign of unprecedented bitterness, which had lasted for four years, ANDREW JACKSON was elected to the Presidency, and installed in office in 1829. He had been a law Judge and a Senator of the United States. He had, during his entire life, taken an active interest in public affairs, as his letters to President Monroe and other writings and doings of his, abundantly show. But to this must be added the fame and prestige of a most successful military career, which marked him as one eminently fitted to be a ruler of men. His official period was signalized by the most exciting political discussions wherein he was always a central figure, showing that he was entitled to the honors of a successful leader in peace as well as in war.

VIII. 1837-1841. The successor of the nervous and indomitable Jackson, was MARTIN VAN BUREN, an aspiring and an untiring politician,

“Who scorned delights and lived laborious days,”

in the pursuit of a laudable ambition. He was an accomplished professor of the science of government, who fought his way inch by inch to the highest place in the people's gift. He was a wary and a careful manager, who knew his own purposes and the reasons for his decisions, and was not to be easily turned aside from them. He retired from office, and no just reproach could be cast upon his name or official conduct

IX. 1841. WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON was President for but a single month. It is not probable that he ever aspired to the Presidency, or had prepared his mind by thought and study for its great responsibilities. He had neither opportunity, nor inducement nor suggestion to do so; indeed, as all his predecessors had from association or from the concurrence of favorable circumstances, or as in the case of Jackson an ardent, loud and long continued popular attachment. It was the misfortunes, or unpopularity, or ill-luck of Van Buren and his own negative qualities, in contrast with the positive qualities of Gen. Jackson, that made Gen. Harrison President. But the office hunters worried the mild, brave man to death in a single month.

X. 1841-1845. JOHN TYLER, elected Vice-President on the ticket with Harrison, became his constitutional successor. Like all of his predecessors except Washington, Jackson and Harrison, he had been reared to politics and state-craft. He had been Governor of Virginia, and a Senator from that State, and had held other important public positions. He may have *dreamed* of becoming President before he was nominated for Vice-President, but it is not likely that he even did that. He served a stormy term, a faithful, honest, but much abused officer. A little too anxious perhaps for a renomination, but retiring with dignity and honor, if not without chagrin at the failure of the good luck which had made him President.

XI. 1845-1849. JAMES KNOX POLK was elected to the Presidency in 1844. His nomination was somewhat unexpected, perhaps to those who had no idea of voting for any candidate of his party, but he had been successful in political life, had large experience as Governor of Tennessee, and Speaker of the House. He pleased his party as candidate and justified their fondest expectations as Chief Magistrate, surrounding himself with an able Cabinet of Counsellors. The war with Mexico was successfully fought under his Administration, and a rich empire added to our territorial dominions.

XII. 1849-1850. ZACHARY TAYLOR, the twelfth President, owed his nomination entirely to his great military fame, and his election to the fact that the party opposed to him had two candidates in the field. He never had any desire or opportunity to become acquainted with the civil affairs of government, inasmuch as he was a soldier "in the tented field" from his youth, and nothing but a soldier by nature, education and training. He, too, like Harrison, it is thought, was a prey to the voracious and ignoble army of office hunters who besieged him continually for the fifteen months that he held power. There was little to create excitement or call forth much political anxiety during his term, save the "wild hunt" for office. His fame and reputation were therefore unaffected by his brief possession of the Presidential Office.

XIII. 1850-1853. MILLARD FILLMORE became the constitutional successor of President Taylor. Very exciting questions arose during his term of office, which he treated with dignity, if not with statesmanship. Mr. Fillmore, like Mr. Tyler, his forerunner in the way of becoming President, not by election, but by constitutional prescription, had hardly expected that he would ever attain that

much coveted position. But he acquitted himself well, as a conscientious, sensible man, thoroughly acquainted with legislation and general political principles might be expected to do.

XIV. 1853-1857. With the retiracy of Mr. Fillmore, FRANKLIN PIERCE came to the Presidency. He enjoyed considerable local popularity; had been Governor, Senator, &c., and was always a popular man in his State and party. He had sufficient political sagacity and experience to surround himself with competent advisors, and his Administration was successful.

XV. 1857-1861. It must be said of JAMES BUCHANAN, that he long and persistently aspired to the Presidency, and that during his protracted period of public service he endeavored to qualify himself by all the means at his command, (and they were abundant) for the performance of the functions of the Chief Executive. He had been Congressman, Senator, Secretary of State, Minister to England, &c., &c.

It will not be disputed, we suppose, that Mr. Buchanan was a man whose qualifications and experience might warrant him in seeking for the Presidency, without the blame of presumption. His Presidential term was full of perplexity and trouble, and the very opposite opinions held as to the merits of his official conduct, will probably never be reconciled, at least for years to come.

XVI. 1861-1865. Like the nominations of Polk, Pierce and Taylor, the nomination of ABRAHAM LINCOLN was unexpected; the result, perhaps, of *envy*, which even more than *ingratitude*, is the ruling vice in Republics. Accident favored him as much in his election as it did in his nomination. The dissensions of the opposing party made him President, although in a minority of a million on the popular vote. And in regard to his Administration, like that of Mr. Buchanan's, the minds of men are not likely soon to be harmonized.

XVII. 1865-1869. The cold-blooded and cruel assassination of President Lincoln, made ANDREW JOHNSON the constitutional President. It is not probable that he would ever have been taken up for President, by either party, although he had acted with both. The signal failure of his attempt to build up a following for himself that would re-elect him, proves this. His practical knowledge of political affairs would have enabled him to do much good in the settlement of the absorbing questions that followed the war, if, instead of striking out for the gratification of his selfish personal

ambition, he had devoted himself to "Reconstruction" questions alone. Besides this, he was very unjustly treated by the majority in Congress.

XVIII. 1869-1877 ULYSSES S. GRANT, the present incumbent, is the eighteenth and last on the list. Some epigrammatic writer observes that "no prominent man in a civil war, ever gains so much fame or fortune as he that ends it." To President Grant was accorded with singular unanimity, the credit of triumphantly concluding our late civil war. To him Gen. Lee surrendered the sword of the Confederacy, and other fortuitous events conspired to make him successful in a canvass for the Presidency. The war lasted four years, and Johnson's term lasted four years longer. During most of that time Grant never remotely imagined that he would become President.

His nomination was as unexpected, one year before it was made, as any event ever was in the life of any man however favored by fortune. The writer, who expects nothing personally beneficial to himself, from any President, may be pardoned for expressing the the opinion that no man ever filled the Presidential chair, who had less natural capacity, or less preparation for the high position. As he did not originally aspire to it, he does not seem to feel under obligations to do anything to fit himself for its duties. His Administration will, we feel assured, be considered an unsatisfactory one, not only to those who are opposed to him in politics, but to those who are measurably or wholly non-partisan, and even to those who elected him.

II.

In considering how our eighteen Presidents were elected, it may be said that Washington, Adams and Jefferson were chosen candidates, the first, by unanimous popular indication and consent, and the second and third as the acknowledged leaders of the parties that put them forward.

There is no reason why either of these might not have looked forward to the acquisition of the Presidential office. But it is not charged that either of the three intrigued for the position, or practiced the arts of flattery or demagoguism to obtain it. The nominations of Madison and Monroe were made by the Administrations in power, and by their supporters in Congress, which last arranged many things, as was alleged, by a secret party combination called

“King Caucus” by those of the opposing party, and even by those of its own party who did not find favor in the eyes of that same “King.”

It seemed to be the idea of these caucus managers that men who were near the Executive, generally the Secretary of State, we believe, would make safe Presidents, and they alleged that in maintaining that sort of succession they were keeping in the “line of safe precedents ;” but in 1824 the outsiders grew impatient, when William H. Crawford, President Monroe’s Secretary of State, was put forth, as had been customary by the mysterious “Caucus.” Then other candidates stepped boldly forth, or were brought forward with whatever force or unction their friends could give them.

Among those were Henry Clay, Andrew Jackson and John Quincy Adams. No election was had by the electors chosen, and the choice was to be made by the Lower House of Congress, from the three highest on the list presented by the Electoral Colleges. The result of the action of the House was, to say the least of it, amazing and unexpected—and resulted in the election of Adams, the lowest on the list. It was accomplished by the union of the friends of Mr. Clay with those of Mr. Adams, and Mr. Clay took office under Mr. Adams as Secretary of State. The wonder excited by this result was produced by the fact that for ten years previous to the election, Clay and Adams had been personal enemies, having differed about certain provisions in the Treaty of Ghent, in the formation of which both took part. And although the vote of Mr. Clay’s State, Kentucky, was cast for Mr. Adams, not one solitary man voted for him at the polls.

The election of Gen. Jackson, in 1828, who was the highest of the three voted for by the House in 1824, was no doubt secured in a large measure by the unlooked-for coalition of the friends of Adams and Clay. Adams was his opponent in the natural course of events, perhaps endorsed by a kind of caucus nomination. But we hear no more of Presidential or other nominations by *caucus*. In 1832 President Jackson was renominated by a body of delegates, which was the first of the National Conventions by which Presidential nominations have since been made very generally by all parties.

It may be said that after the nomination of Mr. Van Buren, in 1836, the selections made by all parties in their Conventions for President and Vice-President were very largely controlled by accident or expediency. It was tacitly, if not openly, conceded that

Van Buren would be Jackson's successor, and the strange bitterness with which this expected result was denounced by his enemies long before the time of the latter's retirement from office, had something to do with securing the succession to Mr. Van Buren. The nomination of Gen. Harrison in 1840, for President, and John Tyler for Vice-President, was one of the first instances where party necessity dictated the exclusion of the men best fitted and most thought of for those high places. Clay, Webster, and others of the leaders of the Whig party, who had borne the heat and burden of battle, were put aside for Harrison, so that success might be better assured.

And again, in 1848, those great men were ignored because Gen. Taylor with his freshly gathered Mexican laurels, it was supposed, and correctly, too, would be the man most likely to succeed. So also in 1852, Gen. Scott was preferred to the accepted and competent political leaders of the Whig party, and was another *expediency* candidate. So, too, in the Democratic party, Silas Wright and Gen. Cass, who had undergone all the toil and reaped all the censure that the highest party leadership is sure to encounter, were put aside in 1844 for Polk, and in 1852 for Pierce. In all these unexpected nominations by both of the leading parties, expediency was regularly alleged as the motive for making them, but it is very likely that *envy* and *jealousy*, which, as before hinted, are perhaps more the especial vices of republics than even *ingratitude* itself, which, since the Grecian States were in the habit of ostracising their greatest and best public servants, has been proverbially *the* vice of republics.

The decease of Harrison after one month's service made John Tyler President. He was made most keenly to feel that he owed his elevation to a sad dispensation of Providence, and continual contention with his old party associates rendered his term a very uncomfortable one; besides, he had set his heart on being elected to a second term, and in laboring to that end perhaps did not accomplish what he might have done otherwise.

It really seemed that both he and Andrew Johnson, who succeeded to the Presidency after the foul murder of Mr. Lincoln, and who, like Tyler, labored unceasingly to build up a party that would re-elect him—it seemed, we say, as if they both wondered why they were not nominated for the chief office in the first place, and were anxious to see the original mistake corrected by a direct election.

Mr. Fillmore, who was another of the Presidents who obtained his honors by constitutional sanction, or accident, as the captious and censorious will insist, it is not ungenerous to say, was very much more fit to be President than was Gen. Taylor, whom he succeeded. It has never been charged, we believe, that he improperly used his official station to secure his re-election.

III.

We have thus briefly epitomized the Presidents from the adoption of the Constitution in 1788. President Grant, whose term expires in March, 1877, will, it is probable, remain in office until the close of the centennial year. Have the monarchial rulers of Europe for the past century been personally as well qualified for their great offices? Have they been equal in talents and morals to our Chief Magistrates? The answer must be substantially in the negative. With the exception of two or three, our Presidents have been men of unquestioned talents, and all of them of unimpeachable personal character and private behavior. Washington, John Adams, Jefferson, Madison and Jackson, would have ranked as eminent men in any age or in any country. The rest, or nearly all of them, were above the average, although it may be truly said that the nomination and election of more than half of them was accomplished more nearly as you draw numbers in a lottery, than as induced by clear indications of fitness, or of a popular sense of their high deserts.

It now becomes necessary for the purpose in view to resort to the catalogue of sovereigns in Europe about the period of 1790, as quoted in the beginning of this paper, and extend the list down to the present time, in order to learn who were the contemporary rulers with our eighteen Presidents.

The sovereigns of England for the century beginning in 1776 have been four: George III., (1760-1820); George IV., (1820-1830); William IV., (1830-1837); Victoria, (1837 until the present time.) George III., who commenced his reign in 1760, was said to have been a young prince of unspotted reputation, who Byron said possessed

“That household virtue most uncommon,”

of constancy to a bad, ugly woman. He was religious, moral and in the highest degree temperate, and was actually, without regard to Byron's sneer, a model of domestic virtue; but his intellect, never vigorous, gave way in 1764. He had various returns of

insanity until 1810, when he finally retired from all participation in the affairs of government, and George IV. was made Regent.

In 1820 George IV. ascended the throne of England, and was perhaps the worst man that has ruled any Christian country during the century, and although it is said he egotistically styled himself "the first gentleman of England," and although when young was handsome and affable, he was utterly and in every way unprincipled, and a shameless debauchee.

William IV. was a frank, harmless sort of a man, with tolerable morals for a king, and with no ability to speak of. He was succeeded by Victoria, who still reigns, and whose example as a sovereign, and whose domestic virtues entitle her to universal respect.

In France Louis XVI. (1774-1793,) ascended the throne in 1774. He was a harmless man, and his fate was personally hard—but if the sins of his progenitors could have been fairly visited upon him, there were enough of them to make him liable for the terrible restitutions he had to make. Then followed Napoleon and his fellow Consuls, and Napoleon as Emperor (1793-1814). It is fair to presume that every one has his opinions about a character so prominent, and can compare him, for himself, with our Chief Magistrates.

Napoleon I. was succeeded by Louis XVIII., (1814-1824,) who was a man of fair abilities and considerable learning. Charles X. (1824-1830,) succeeded his brother Louis XVIII. He was remarkable for nothing but his unbending devotion to the prerogatives of royalty, and to his proud and ancient family adherents who advised him so fatally. He was ousted by Louis Phillippe, (1830-1848,) who had been severely trained in trying vicissitudes, and who was certainly a respectable sovereign and a man of exemplary private deportment. To him succeeded Napoleon III. (1848-1870,) who was a man of decided talents, who had been educated by others, and who had educated himself for a sovereign ruler. His ambition betrayed him into crimes and excesses which were perpetrated against his political competitors—but the masses of his countrymen had reason to be satisfied with his administration of affairs. Thiers and McMahon can only be regarded as Provincial Governors whose terms were never expected to continue long, and neither of whom can as yet be regarded as having a fixed status as rulers. The first is undoubtedly a statesman of many accomplishments; the last an equally accomplished soldier, who owes his elevation to that circumstance alone. Leaving out the Directory

and the Consuls, and including Thiers and McMahon, France has had eight supreme rulers within the century, all of whom, excepting the three Bourbons, were remarkable men.

Spain has been governed during the century by Charles IV. (1788-1808,) Joseph Bonaparte, (1808-1813,) Ferdinand VII. (1813-1833,) and Isabella II. (1833-1868). Since the constrained abdication of Isabella II., in 1868, Spain has had no really fixed government, but continually changing form under provisional governments, mock-monarchies, and mock-republics, in which Prim, Victor Amadeus, or more properly the Duke of Aosta, Castellar, Serranno and others appear and disappear respectively, until now we have Alfonso XII., son of Isabella, and Don Carlos disputing for the crown, and neither likely to obtain it permanently. Spain may be said to have had but four rulers during the century.

Charles and Ferdinand were remarkable only for their imbecility and their vices, and deserve no further comment. Joseph Bonaparte might have done very well if it had suited the English to let him alone. Isabella II. was compelled to abdicate on account of her shocking vices, and now lives in France. The mock-King Amadeus also retired in disgust after a short experience, and permitted the country to try conclusions between ultra-Republicanism and ultra-Legitimacy.

Russia has had five sovereigns within the century, "Old Catharine," as Mr. Jefferson calls her, was the first, (1762-1796.) She was followed by Paul I., (1796-1801,) who was murdered. He was succeeded by Alexander I. (1801-1825;) he by Nicholas, (1825-1835;) and Nicholas by Alexander II., (1855—still reigning.) There seems to have been a vast improvement in the character of the Russian autocrats since Catharine and Paul. Their successors have been men of decent lives and respectable personal behavior—much better than the average of absolute monarchs.

In Prussia (Germany,) the greatest of the Fredericks, Frederick II. (1740-1786,) reigned in 1776. His successors have been: Frederick William II., (1786-1797); Frederick William III., (1797-1840); Frederick William IV. (1840-1861); and Wilhelm I. (1861—still reigning). All of these have been distinguished by somewhat similar qualities—all being warlike, economical, and ruling with absolute military sway. The present Emperor is one of the same sort as his predecessors, but really only serves the purpose of a lay

figure in Bismarck's play of absolutism. There has been no really brilliant man among them since Frederick the Great.

It may seem almost impossible to make any parallel between the sovereigns here sketched and any of our Presidents—so different is the mode of rearing and educating hereditary rulers, and the different kind of education and experience on which our elective system compels us to depend. One thing, however, is certain, the personal habits and characters of our Presidents contrast very favorably with those of their royal contemporaries. It would seem that continence was a virtue hardly expected among kings and emperors, and was not absolutely required of *all* the queens and empresses.

Drunkenness and gluttony among male rulers was not rare, and "Old Catharine" was celebrated for all kind of debaucheries. It is manifest, however, that from some cause, perhaps the more precarious tenure of their power, they behave much better personally than they formerly did—their morals are evidently improving—and it may be hoped that those who are born to thrones may come to believe that they have a large responsibility, and that they must not deliver themselves over solely to physical indulgence, as was the fashion a hundred years ago.

In reviewing the list of our Presidents, the first five: Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison and Monroe, were chosen almost as a matter of course, and it is not likely that better selections could be made under any circumstances.

Jackson and Harrison owed their elevation *partly* to their military titles and achievements; Taylor and Grant owe their's *entirely* to their military reputations. The experiment of electing purely military men to the Presidency ought to end with Grant. Clearly, it is not safe to risk a repetition of such a rule as his. The election of John Quincy Adams was brought about by a most unexpected coalition. Tyler and Fillmore came into power through the acts of Providence. All three of these were competent to fulfill the duties of their office. Johnson, too, reached the Presidency through the shocking crime of an assassin. He was not wholly the man for the crisis, although he might have done worse, as he certainly might have done better.

The accidents attending nominating Conventions conferred power upon Polk, Pierce and Lincoln, to the exclusion of more eminent men, who seemed to be desired by the masses of the people, and designed as the best men for the office, and this is likely

always to be the case as long as Conventions make nominations—for as already remarked, Envy, Jealousy and Expediency, will almost always effect the defeat of the best and most eminent candidates.

Van Buren and Buchanan had fair claims to their respective nominations and elections. They were competent, and each had supporters all over the Union. In selecting them no one was startled or mortified, as in the cases mentioned.

And on the whole we are bound to conclude that if we do not fare any worse in the selection of our Presidents for the next hundred years than we have for the past century of our existence, we shall have reason to be thankful, and continue a patriotic preference for our own before any other existing form of government.

The line of Presidential succession, with the cardinal historical points of the incumbents of the office, may be epitomized. By the subjoined it will be seen that Virginia has furnished precisely one-third of our Presidents, and that all but two, Lincoln and Grant, were born within the limits of one of the Original Thirteen Colonies:—

	BORN.		DIED.		Elected.	Served.	Native of	Resided in
Washington,	Feb.	22, 1732	Dec.	14, 1799	1788	8 yrs.	Va.	Va.
Adams,	Oct.	19, 1735	July	4, 1826	1796	4 “	Mass	Mass
Jefferson, ...	April	2, 1743	July	4, 1826	1800	8 “	Va.	Va.
Madison,	Mar.	16, 1751	June	28, 1836	1808	8 “	Va.	Va.
Monroe,	April	28, 1758	July	4, 1831	1816	8 “	Va.	Va.
Adams,	July	11, 1767	Feb.	23, 1848	1824	4 “	Mass	Mass
Jackson,	Mar.	15, 1767	June	8, 1845	1828	8 “	S.C.	Tenn
Van Buren, ..	Dec.	5, 1782	July	24, 1862	1836	4 “	N. Y.	N. Y.
Harrison, ...	Feb.	9, 1773	April	4, 1841	1840	1 month	Va.	Ohio
Tyler,	Mar.	29, 1790	Jan.	17, 1862	1840	3 y. 11 mo	Va.	Va.
Polk,	Nov.	2, 1795	June	15, 1849	1844	4 yrs.	N. C.	Tenn
Taylor,	Nov.	24, 1784	July	9, 1850	1848	1 yr. 4 mo	Va.	La.
Fillmore, ...	Jan.	7, 1800	March	8, 1874	1848	2 y. 8 mo.	N. Y.	N. Y.
Pierce,	Nov.	23, 1804	Oct.	8, 1869	1852	4 yrs.	N. H.	N. H.
Buchanan, ..	April	13, 1791	June	1, 1868	1856	4 “	Pa.	Pa.
Lincoln,	Feb.	12, 1809	April	15, 1865	1860	4 y. 1½ mo	Ky.	Ill.
Johnson,	Dec.	29, 1808	July	31, 1875	1864	3 y. 10½ m	N. C.	Tenn
Grant,	April	27, 1822	In Office.		1868		Ohio	Ill.

To complete this paper, we shall give in tabulated form, beginning with the government under the Continental Congress in 1776, the Presidents and the contemporaneous rulers in England, France, Spain, Prussia and Russia, during each Presidential period, down to the present time. During the disturbed periods in France, and laterly in Spain, when there was no fixed government, for short periods the classification is not historically exact, but is nevertheless accurate enough for the object in view:—

UNITED STATES.		ENGLAND.	FRANCE.	SPAIN.	PRUSSIA.	RUSSIA.
1776-1789,	Cont Congress,	George III.....	Louis XVI.....	Charles IV.....	{ Frederick II, Fred'k William II..	Catharine II.
1789-1797,	Washington, ..	George III.....	{ Louis XVI..... Napoleon I.....	Charles IV.....	Fred'k William II..	{ Catharine II. Paul I.
1797-1801,	Adams,	George III.....	Napoleon I.....	Charles IV.....	Fred'k William III.	Paul I.
1801-1809,	Jefferson	George III.....	Napoleon I.....	{ Charles IV..... Joseph Bonap'e	Fred'k William III.	Alexander I.
1809-1817,	Madison,	George III.....	{ Napoleon I..... Louis XVIII..	{ Ferdinand VII. Ferdinand VII.	Fred'k William III.	Alexander I.
1817-1825,	Monroe,	{ George III..... George IV.....	{ Louis XVIII.. Charles X.....	{ Ferdinand VII. Isabella II.....	Fred'k William III.	Alexander I.
1825-1829,	Adams,	George IV.....	Charles X.....	Ferdinand VII.	Fred'k William III.	Nicholas I.
1829-1837,	Jackson,	{ George IV..... William IV.....	{ Charles X..... Louis Philippe..	{ Ferdinand VII. Isabella II.....	Fred'k William III.	Nicholas I.
1837-1841,	Van Buren.....	Victoria,	Louis Philippe..	Isabella II.....	{ Fred'k William III. Fred'k William IV.	Nicholas I.
1841-1845,	{ Harrison..... Tyler,	Victoria,	Louis Philippe.,	Isabella II.....	Fred'k William IV.	Nicholas I.
1845-1849,	Polk,	Victoria,	{ Louis Philippe. Napoleon III..	Isabella II.....	Fred'k William IV.	Nicholas I.
1849-1853,	{ Taylor,	Victoria,	Napoleon III..	Isabella II.....	Fred'k William IV.	Nicholas I.
1853-1857,	{ Fillmore..... Pierce,	Victoria,	Napoleon III..	Isabella II.....	Fred'k William IV.	{ Nicholas I. Alexander II.
1857-1861,	Buchanan,	Victoria,	Napoleon III..	Isabella II.....	Fred'k William IV.	Alexander II.
1861-1865,	Lincoln,	Victoria,	Napoleon III..	Isabella II.....	Wilhelm I.....	Alexander II.
1865-1869,	Johnson,	Victoria,	Napoleon III..	{ Isabella II..... Provisional.....	Wilhelm I.....	Alexander II.
1869-1876,	Grant,	Victoria,	{ Napoleon III.. Thiers,	{ Amadeus..... Provisional.....	Wilhelm I.....	Alexander II.
			{ MacMahon, Alfonso XII.	{ Alfonso XII.		

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

The following constitutes the list of Vice-Presidents, with their nativity, time of birth, term of office and decease.

1st. George Washington, President.

John Adams, Vice-President from 1789 to 1797; elected to the Presidency.

2d. John Adams, President.

Thomas Jefferson, Vice-President from 1797 to 1801; elected to the Presidency.

3d. Thomas Jefferson, President.

First term, Aaron Burr, Vice-President, from 1801 to 1805; born in New Jersey, Feb., 1756; died in 1836.

Second term, George Clinton, Vice-President from 1805 to 1809; born in New York, 1739; died April, 1812.

4th. James Madison, President.

First term, George Clinton, Vice-President from 1809 to 1812; died in office.

Second term, Elbridge Gerry, Vice-President from 1813 to 1814; died in office; born in Massachusetts, in 1744; died Nov., 1814.

5th. James Monroe, President.

Daniel D. Tompkins, Vice-President from 1817 to 1825; born in New York, 1774; died June, 1825.

6th. John Quincy Adams, President.

John C. Calhoun, Vice-President from 1825 to 1829; born in South Carolina, March, 1792; died March, 1850.

7th. Andrew Jackson, President.

First term, John C. Calhoun, Vice-President from 1829 to 1832 in which year he resigned.

Second term, Martin Van Buren, Vice-President from 1833 to 1837; elected to the Presidency.

8th. Martin Van Buren, President.

Richard M. Johnson, Vice-President from 1837 to 1841; born in Kentucky in 1780; died in 1850.

9th. William H. Harrison, President.

John Tyler, Vice-President until Harrison's death, whom he succeeded to the Presidency.

10th. James K. Polk, President.

George M. Dallas, Vice-President from 1845 to 1849; born in New York, July, 1792; died Dec. 1864.

11th. Zachary Taylor, President.

Millard Fillmore, Vice-President until Taylor's death, whom he succeeded to the Presidency.

12th. Franklin Pierce, President.

William R. King, Vice-President; died during his first year in office; born in North Carolina, in 1786; died in 1853.

13th. James Buchanan, President.

John C. Breckenridge, Vice-President from 1857 to 1861; born in Kentucky in 1821; died in 1875.

14th. Abraham Lincoln, President.

First term, Hannibal Hamlin, Vice-President from 1861 to 1865; born in Maine, August, 1809—still living.

Second term, Andrew Johnson, Vice-President until Lincoln's assassination, when he succeeded to the Presidency.

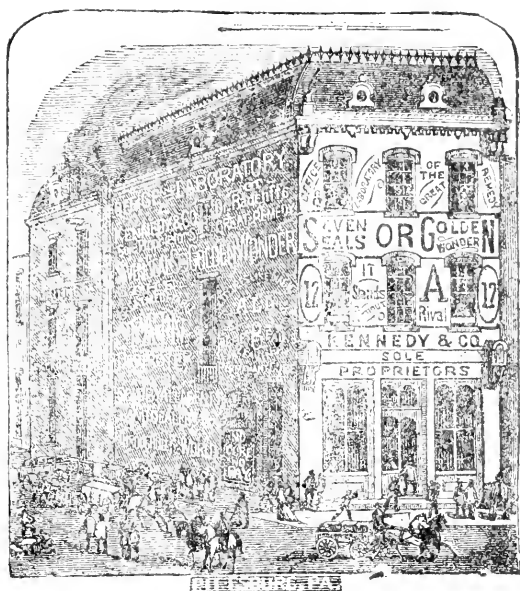
15th. Ulysses S. Grant, President.

First term, Schuyler Colfax, Vice-President from 1869 to 1873; born in New York, March, 1823—still living.

Second term, Henry Wilson, Vice-President from 1873 to 1875; died in office; born in New Hampshire, Feb., 1812; died Nov. 22, 1875.

Unlike the Presidents, but few of the Vice-Presidents came from Virginia—only two of the eighteen. Three—John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and Martin Van Buren, rose from the Vice-Presidency to the Presidency by election; and three—John Tyler, Millard Fillmore and Andrew Johnson, rose to the office through the death of the President. Four—George Clinton, Elbridge Gerry, William R. King and Henry Wilson, died in office. One—John C. Calhoun, resigned in consequence of political disagreement with the President, Andrew Jackson. Two—Hannibal Hamlin and Schuyler Colfax are still living. Not a single President except the present incumbent, U. S. Grant, survives.

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